



# Renfrew County and District Health Unit

## FACT SHEET

December 2022

### HOLIDAY FOOD SAFETY

This holiday season, reduce your risk of foodborne illness ("food poisoning") by remembering to take extra care when preparing, cooking, serving and storing food. Foodborne illness ("food poisoning") is caused by eating food contaminated with certain bacteria, viruses or parasites (e.g., Salmonella, E. coli, Listeria monocytogenes). These bacteria are sometimes found in raw foods, unwashed produce, and unpasteurized milk, fruit juices and cider.

#### Four Steps to Reduce the Risk:

- 1 Clean frequently:** Wash hands, surfaces (e.g., kitchen counters) and utensils often to avoid the spread of bacteria. Always wash fresh fruit and vegetables with clean water.
- 2 Separate raw foods:** Keep raw foods separate from cooked and ready-to-eat foods to avoid cross-contamination. Never place cooked food back on the same plate or cutting board that had contact with raw food, unless it has been thoroughly cleaned using soap and warm water.
- 3 Cook foods fully:** Kill harmful bacteria by cooking foods to the recommended internal temperature (as shown below). Using an instant-read digital thermometer, insert into the thickest part of the food, away from bone, fat or gristle.
- 4 Safely store foods:** Bacteria can grow rapidly when foods are not stored at a cold enough temperature. Throw out perishable food that has sat at room temperature for more than **two hours**. You cannot tell whether food is contaminated with bacteria by the way it looks, tastes or smells.  
**When in doubt, throw it out!**



#### Additional Holiday Tips:

- Cook stuffing to a minimum internal temperature of 74°C (165°F). Cook separately in the oven in its own dish, or on the stove top. If you choose to stuff your turkey, stuff it loosely, and remove all stuffing right after cooking.
- Avoid eating uncooked cookie dough, batters or frostings that contain raw eggs.
- Avoid eating uncooked flour as it may contain E. coli bacteria.
- Purchase pasteurized eggnog, fruit juices and cider.
- If you are serving food buffet-style, keep food hot by using warming trays or crock pots. Keep cold foods cold by putting serving trays on crushed ice.

Visit **Government of Canada - Holiday Food Safety** for more tips.

#### Safe Internal Food Temperatures:



- 82°C (180°F) for whole poultry
- 74°C (165°F) for stuffing, casseroles, leftovers, egg dishes, ground turkey and ground chicken, including sausages containing poultry meat
- 71°C (160°F) for pork chops, ribs and roasts, and for ground beef, ground pork and ground veal, including sausages
- At least 63°C (145°F) for all whole muscle beef and veal cuts, like steaks and roasts

Source: Government of Canada. *Holiday food safety*. Available from: <https://www.canada.ca/en/health-canada/services/seasonal-food-safety/holiday-food-safety.html> [Accessed 20 November 2022]